



**Town of Camden**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the**  
**Camden Economic Development Advisory Committee**  
**August 27, 2012**  
**5:30pm**

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Peter Gross, Pete Brown, Ellis Cohn  
**Liaisons:** Martin Cates (Select Board), Lowrie Sargent (Planning Board)  
**Alternates:** Deb Dodge, Meg Quijano  
**Visitors:** Donald White (Select Board), Alissa Morris, Ben Fowlie,  
Bob Williams, Ed Noyce

**ABSENT:** Kipp Wright, Rick Bates

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm.

**2. Approval of Board Minutes**

Pete Brown made a motion that the minutes of the June 25<sup>th</sup> meeting be accepted. Ellis Cohn seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

**3. Camden International Film Festival (CIFF)**

Alissa Morris and Ben Fowlie of Camden International Film Festival presented plans to the committee for the 2012 CIFF scheduled for the end of September. They said that this year they are moving 75% of the festival to Camden and that the majority of events will take place at the Camden Opera House. Fowlie noted that workshops and conferences will be held in addition to the screening of films, and the activities will fill the whole Opera House. Fowlie said that his organization works hard not only to create valuable content but also to bring visitors to Camden. The event will attract reporters and press attention, he added.

Committee members expressed support for the work that CIFF is doing for Camden as well as for independent filmmakers.

**4. Regional Transit System Feasibility Study**

Don White gave an overview of the work that had gone on since last fall with regard to looking at establishing a transit system for the midcoast. He said that the Midcoast Bus Committee had been working with consultants to discuss possible solutions for offering public transportation between Thomaston and Camden. White told the committee that money from the Maine Department of Transportation had become available to fund a feasibility study that would assess the needs of local residents for regional transportation. White said that use of the funds would require a 20% match to be divided among the participating communities. Camden's share would be \$1650. White added that the feasibility study would take a year to complete.

There was some discussion on the specifics of the ideas under consideration for the transit system. It was suggested that the region covered might be extended to include Lincolnville, Belfast, and perhaps the Owl's Head airport. White said he would take CEDAC's ideas to the committee. He also noted that with the year-long feasibility study, the earliest the public transit services might become available would be 2014.

Pete Brown made a motion to recommend an expenditure of \$1,650 to help fund a regional transit system feasibility study, and to bring it to the Select Board for approval. Deb Dodge seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

#### **5. Camden Area Website Proposal**

Bob Williams of Camden was on hand to present an idea to CEDAC regarding creating an economic development website to promote doing business in Camden. Ed Noyce, a teacher and website developer, demonstrated the technology that is available for online virtual tours. Williams suggested that utilization of this technology would present Camden as a forward-looking community.

There was discussion on the various Camden area websites that are already in place, including the sites belonging to the Chamber of Commerce, the Town of Camden, and the Camden Downtown Business Group. Discussion centered on how the information emanating from Camden is somewhat fractured and could be coordinated more cohesively to present a unified brand.

Brian Hodges spoke about efforts by the Midcoast Economic Development District (McEDD) to market the economic development opportunities our region offers. He noted that virtual tours have not been featured on the sites that currently exist. Hodges said that the presentation by Williams and Noyce had brought to light important ideas and suggested that if a website project were opened to bid, that would be the appropriate process for moving forward.

#### **6. Election of Officers**

Peter Gross said that because this was the first meeting of CEDAC since new members had been approved by the Select Board, a chairperson and vice chair needed to be elected.

Deb Dodge made a motion that Peter Gross be elected Chair. The motion was seconded by Ellis Cohn. It was unanimously approved.

Peter Gross moved that Pete Brown be elected Vice Chair. Deb Dodge seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

#### **7. Updates**

Brian Hodges summarized the first meeting of the new Downtown Network Board. He said that the Board had elected Peter Gross and Oscar Verest as Co-Chairs to represent the combined leadership of CEDAC and the Camden Downtown Business Group. Hodges told the committee that the first meeting of the Network Board had focused on grant opportunities, and that the Board will continue to identify priorities from the Downtown Master Plan to recommend to the Select Board. He noted that the second monthly meeting

of CEDAC had been replaced by the Downtown Network Board meeting.

Hodges also updated the committee on other grants that had been submitted. He said that \$2500 had been received from the National Endowment for the Humanities to fund a program in conjunction with the Camden Public Library on American Music.

8. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of CEDAC is scheduled for Monday, September 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm.

9. **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 7:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Karen Brace  
Recording Secretary